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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CHARTER OF
THE UNITED NATIONS AND ON THE
STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF
THE ORGANIZATION
26 January-6 February 1998

Revised proposal presented by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya with a view to strengthening the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security

Because of its far-reaching impact on the life and well-being of peoples, the maintenance of international peace and security is one of the purposes for which the United Nations was established. To that end, the framers of the Organization's Charter established effective collective measures to prevent threats to and violations of international peace and security and to suppress acts of aggression. The Charter of the United Nations assigns to the Security Council principal responsibility for the achievement of this goal.

Since the General Assembly is the organ of the United Nations that embodies the Organization's universal and democratic character, the Charter of the United Nations states that it may consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security and may make recommendations in their regard to the Members of the United Nations or to the Security Council or to both.

Developments in the international arena in recent times have provided the United Nations with appropriate opportunities to play the role assigned to it under the Charter. If the United Nations is to be more effective in strengthening the efforts of the international community to promote cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, there is a need for a reorganization and reform of the Organization and for the necessary measures to be taken to enhance the role of its major organs on the basis of the principles of justice, democracy and the full sovereign equality of Member States. This process must in the first instance address the improvement of the working methods and mechanisms of the Security Council so that no single State or restricted group of States is given the opportunity to obstruct its actions and resolutions by invoking the rule of the consensus of its permanent members.

It may be said that the changes that have taken place in the international arena in recent times have reduced the use made by certain States permanent members of the Council of that rule. This, however, is an element of limited impact that does not obviate the need for a discussion of the rule with a view to eliminating the fears of many Members concerning the domination that is exercised by a few over the actions of the Security Council and that prompts them to pursue a policy of double standards in order to secure their own political advantage.

The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization can contribute to the efforts being made to reform the Organization so that it can perform the tasks assigned to it effectively and efficiently. In this context, the Special Committee must explore the proposals made to revitalize the General Assembly and to highlight its role as the principal organ mandated to discuss any matters within the scope of the Charter, including the maintenance of international peace and security. The Special Committee should also contribute to the efforts to reform the Security Council, including its composition, and to improve its working methods.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya believes that the following ideas and proposals will assist the Special Committee in its endeavour to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, bearing in mind that other Member States will have other views and ideas to supplement and develop these proposals:

1. Consideration, pursuant to the provisions of Articles 10, 11 and 14 of the Charter, of ways and means of bolstering the role of the General Assembly in the maintenance of international peace and security as a common responsibility of all Member States of the United Nations;

2. Recommendation of ways to enhance the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council on the basis of Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter and within the framework of the endeavour by both organs to strengthen international peace and security;

3. Discussion of the role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security; consideration of the adverse consequences of invoking the rule of the consensus of the permanent members of the Council; and exploration of ways to limit the use made of the rule, including the identification of issues with respect to which such use may not be made;

4. Identification of the procedural matters to which reference is made in paragraph 2 of Article 27 of the Charter;

5. Elaboration of criteria to ensure that the composition of the Security Council reflects the general membership of the United Nations; equitable geographical distribution in the membership of the Council; and conduct of a periodic review to improve the Council's working methods;

6. Formulation of a precise definition of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security so as to ensure that there is no resort to

action under Chapter VII of the Charter in cases that do not constitute such a threat;

7. Exploration of the effective implementation of Article 31 of the Charter, which ensures the right of any Member of the United Nations to participate, without a vote, in the discussion of any question brought before the Security Council whenever the latter considers that the interests of that Member are specially affected.